643 766 are placed in the tomb: two sheep skins (gando); some cushions (nagpouya); several bolsters (fourkamsé); and a zoukougré -- all made of leather. All of these are arranged as though the chief were to lie down to rest.

After the corpse has been washed (Naba Siguire, father of the present Mogho Naba, was washed by marabouts [125] since he was the son of a naba who was a Moslem believer), it is clothed all in white. In the house of every Mogho Naba a corner of the wall is [531 761] decorated with rather attractive designs, and the dead Mogho Naba is carried through it on his way to the tomb. The sight of this corner, which is seldom visited, reminds the chief still living of the mortality of all beings and makes him realize that in the same way as he succeeded someone, so will he, in turn, be replaced by another; the corner will one day become an opening through which his own body will pass at the end of his lifetime.

In addition to the garments in which he is clothed, the following items are placed in the grave beside him: a folded white robe (fou yorgo); a pair of trousers (kourga); a blanket (fou gobga); a pair of slippers (néoda); a small knife (souga); a sword (zangoégo); a gourd of beer (dam) with a calabash over the neck and a small cloth (leppré) over it; a loaf of salt (yamsem); a gourd filled with a hundred kola nuts (gouré wamdé); a sewn sack filled with cowries (liguide ne yolmoumdi); napaga ornaments (douamba and zuyan); and tobacco if the chief smoked or chewed it.

• [767] The undertaker is entitled to take the salt, some kola nuts, and some meat when he departs.

[126] When the burial is over, one walks around the house of the deceased.

643 It should be noted that before the burial or sometimes when the death of the king is first known, all of his wives who have children take flight for fear that their son will be made kourita.

The kourita is a child of the deceased and must bear the latter's name. He is exiled and must never, so long as he lives, look upon the new Mogho Naba. Until the emperor is represented on earth by his kourita, his successor cannot be named. This explains the general flight of all of the wives who have children.

533 their praises and beating fiercely on their drums in the hope of receiving a few cowries, kola nuts, or at least some beer.

326 306 The smiths (saba), by which is meant those who work with iron, extract the metal from the ore and make it into hoes and hatchets. They sometimes work with wood, as in other parts of the Sudan, but usually this industry is carried out by members of another guild. The jewellers make bracelets, file teeth, repair worn hoes, etc. They are not smiths, properly speaking, and anyone may exercise their trade.

767 The undertakers (lada) offer gifts to the spirits of the deceased on the day of death or its anniversary (kouré). They also lay the corpse in the grave, and if death was due to illness, it is impossible to proceed with the burial without them. But anyone may dig the grave and carry the corpse. We shall discuss the undertakers again when funerals are described.

Chapter 2. The Family

596 The structure of the Roman family and the power granted to the paterfamilias, its very foundation, have been greatly and justly admired. Something like the paterfamilias is to be found among the Mossi. Would that we also found the Roman matron! As we have seen above, every Mossi is subject to the Moro Naba, a province chief, a canton chief, and a village chief. He is also subject in a more immediate sense to the head of his family, and he can do nothing without his consent. If he wishes to marry, he consults the family head, in whose household his bride will lodge when she arrives in the village. On the other hand, the man who wishes to give his daughter in marriage never does so without consulting his family head, at whose house the girl will stay before she goes to live with her husband.

[551] The family is thus very tightly organized among the Mossi. Each family has a name which is seldom used; if one of its members was ever naba, the name derives from that of the first naba. Members of [582] the same family may not intermarry, and usually they all have the [784] same kisgou (prohibition), whether the term designates a totem, a taboo, or something else altogether. The head of the family is its oldest member. Upon his death, the authority is transferred not to his

763 old man passes away. Suddenly, a shrill and lugubrious cry uttered by the first wife pierces the air and announces to everyone that a soul has just left its body and appeared before God. All the women rally to this call, and for a few minutes the most plaintive laments fill the dead man's soukala.

764 767 Silence is soon restored. One of the family members fetches the undertaker, lada, without whom it is impossible to proceed with the burial. Meanwhile, one of the séko which enclose the inner courtyard is torn off to permit the soul to get through and leave the living in peace. An old woman and the dead man's children proceed to lay out the corpse, using only their left hand. The body is washed with warm water and vigorously soaped, then annointed with karite butter. The head is shaved and the hair buried, unless the shaving was done before the dying man breathed his last, in which case the hair is tossed to the wind. When the corpse has been thoroughly washed, the undertaker softens the joints of the neck, arms, and legs so the body will slide more easily into the pit; then he lays out the body in the hut of the first wife if she is still alive, otherwise in the hut of the dead man.

764 The corpse is laid out on a mat, on its side in the position of a sleeping man, with arms and legs folded, and covered with a white blanket. As soon as the body is laid out, lugubrious cries are heard once more, and the men and youths go to dig the pit while the women remain sitting in the courtyard and watch the corpse. Women friends and neighbors prepare food for the family which has been visited by death.

The grave is usually dug in the family field, where the ancestors already rest. The villages have no common graveyards; /69/ each family has its own. Nevertheless, the vicinity of a sacred grove is sometimes used as a cemetery. To be buried away from one's relatives is a great misfortune, and one who dies far from his village strongly desires that his body be returned there; the family always fulfills this last wish if at all possible. Otherwise, the dead person is buried along the road that leads to his village. In order to rest near his ancestors in his last sleep, a native who feels that his strength is ebbing may build his huts in the middle of the bush, at the place where the village of his ancestors used to stand. An old man esteemed and loved by his family is buried in front of the soukala, and this is the rule for nabas.

The undertaker prescribes the shape and size of the grave, but anyone may dig it. Mossi graves consist of a circular pit about 1.50

769 for the koure, which for lack of a better term we have called an anniversary, although the festivities may be held a few days after the burial if everything is ready.

769 The koure is always celebrated on Sunday. The kourita, the eldest
767 son, or the head of the family first sets a date, but this is not the real date. A few days later he discloses the true day to everyone. Relatives and friends gather on Saturday for a gala family dinner of meat, salt, beer, and sarabo. Sunday at daybreak the women wail, weep, and shriek. At dawn the members of the deceased person's family shave their heads, mark themselves with stripes of ashes, and don mourning clothes, exactly as they did on the day of the death. Around noon, each of the relatives and friends brings an animal as an offering to the deceased. The undertaker (lada) presents it. First he takes the sheep given by the eldest son and stands before the door of the hut in which the body was laid after death. Three times he offers the sheep by making it move forward and back, while saying: "Your son gives you a sheep. Take it and eat it with your whole family." Then he seizes the sheep and holds its jaws shut to prevent it from bleating. Helpers drag the sheep out of the inner courtyard and slit its throat. An old woman comes to catch the blood in a gourd. The meat is cooked separately, while the blood mixed with millet flour is cooked with the viscera, liver, lungs, and some salt. This is the semdle, of which all members of the family must partake. This is one of the customs to which the Mossi are most attached. While the oldest son's sheep is butchered and prepared, each of the children presents his victim to the undertaker, who offers it to the deceased as before. Then comes the turn of other relatives and friends.

When all the animals have been offered, the undertaker takes some beer from a jar which has stood in the sun and empties a gourdful onto the grave. The rest of the jar is his. The remainder of the day
769 is devoted to the slaughter of all the victims, which vary in number according to the wealth and fame of the deceased, to cooking them, eating them, and drinking. In the evening, one of the dead man's daughters takes a gourd full of water, places it on her head without a pad, and walks three times around her father's soukala, shrieking and weeping. All those present follow her and blend their wails with hers. She returns to the inner courtyard and pours the water from her gourd into the pot where the millet mush is cooking. If the head of the household had a dog, the animal is now killed and eaten. The whole night is spent in endless dances and games.

769 On Monday millet beer is prepared for Wednesday, and the dances and games continue, as they do on Tuesday. On this day all the wives of the dead man vanish, because they must not witness the ceremony of pounding the grave that will take place on the following day.

/75/ On Wednesday morning the whole family goes to the grave 769 with paddles, accompanied by drummers and the undertaker. The 767 women have brought water, and everyone pounds the earth over the grave, on top of which an earthen pot is left in the case of a woman, a stone in the case of a man. When the grave has been thoroughly pounded, the undertaker kills a chicken on the stone or pot and says: "Take the chicken from the grave, eat it with your family, and leave your children in peace." Then he takes a gourd of beer and pours it over the grave. The chicken is roasted and eaten, and the jar of beer is drunk on the spot. Everyone returns to the house of the deceased, and the games and dances are taken up with renewed vigor.

769 On Thursday the whole family goes to market and thanks the friends who have assisted at the festivities and who have helped them.

The funeral ceremonies are now over, and there will be no further ado about the deceased except once a year on the Day of the Dead.

Young men or girls who die childless also have a kouré, usually on the same day as an old man or woman who died previously. If no one in the family has recently died, the children's kouré is carried out without ceremonies. The father, mother, and younger siblings shave and build a small hut which represents the hut of the deceased, and this is where the chickens or sometimes a goat are offered to him. Millet beer, of course, is distributed to the relatives and friends who are present, but there is no dancing and no pounding of the grave.

Ostensibly the death of a naba is not known, and the poor man is 766 buried without ceremony. When his heirs have gathered all that is needed to give their father a funeral worthy of him, they have the news of his death spread everywhere on a Saturday morning. A dummy built with the dead man's clothes is laid in the hut of his first wife or in his own hut, and all the ceremonies are carried out Saturday night as they would be for any other important burial. The dummy is carried like a corpse; the soil covering the pit is disturbed slightly, and the clothes are buried there. On the following day, Sunday, all 769 the kouré ceremonies are held, and their solemnity is proportional to the naba's power.

Thus everyone has his kouré, with the exception of nursing children, who will soon return, and of suicides.